

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DREW WILLIAMS
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Drew Williams, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 60, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Drew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Drew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Among his accomplishments, Drew has earned 42 merit badges and attended Camp Gieger twice. He has also earned the God and Me, God and Family and God and Church awards, and further has served Troop 60 of Savannah as librarian and historian.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Drew Williams for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN
CHUCK HOWELL

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Chuck Howell for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the City of Denton, Texas.

Captain Chuck Howell has recently been named Fire Officer of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. As a confident and intelligent captain and fireman, Mr. Howell is not afraid to take command or defend a fire himself. He has gained much respect from his fellow firemen and maintains a level of competency that stands unparalleled.

It is with great honor that I recognize Captain Chuck Howell for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

HONORING AND PRAISING THE
NAACP ON THE OCCASION OF ITS
98TH ANNIVERSARY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, on its 98th anniversary.

On February 12, 1909, the NAACP was founded by W.E.B. DuBois, Ida Wells-Barnett, Henry Moscowitz, Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, and William English Walling to embark on fight for the civil rights of Native Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and Jewish people. These brave men and women had a vision of equality and a commitment to fight for the downtrodden, in an era when people of color, meaning anyone who was nonwhite, were denied rights and subject to harassment and intimidation. Their commitment to establishing an organization that would stand up to power was unparalleled. The words, from the original charter, prove the need and urgency to establish such an organization. It stated, "To promote equality of rights and to eradicate caste or race prejudice among the citizens of the United States; to advance the interest of colored citizens; to secure for them impartial suffrage; and to increase their opportunities for securing justice in the courts, education for the children, employment according to their ability and complete equality before law." With the spirit of fighting for equality as the motivation and the constitution as the tool, the battle for equality would be with the courts and thus, they marched on.

In the beginning, the NAACP's efforts focused on fighting the segregation laws under Jim Crow. I vividly remember living with separate but equal as the accepted doctrine. I also recall stories of people who gave their lives fighting that injustice. Despite the struggle, the NAACP did not waver in the face of adversity and took its fight with separate but equal education to the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, with the landmark case Brown vs. Board of Education and was victorious.

Today, the NAACP continues to be a voice for minorities and does excellent work with the continued fight for civil rights and equality. On this day, the 98th anniversary, I pay homage to the NAACP for work done in the past, present, and it is to be expected in the future.

IN HONOR OF SGT. FIRST CLASS
FLOYD LAKE

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, Sgt. First Class Floyd Everett Lake was a coura-

geous, dedicated and committed soldier who died on January 20, 2007 when the Blackhawk helicopter in which he was riding with fellow Virgin Islands soldier, Lt. Col. David C. Canegata III and ten other brave Americans was shot down over Baghdad, Iraq. Soldiers Canegata and Lake served together in the Virgin Islands National Guard, and at the Pentagon at the National Guard Bureau.

He was an exemplary soldier who cared for his family and his community and he served his country with distinction. He was said to be quiet and plainspoken, honest and forthright, caring, gentle and generous. In a single moment he was taken from his family, from his wife, Linda, mother, Mrs. Buchanan, children Andre, Keeshawn, Floyd, Jr., J'Nell, Tamila, his mother-in-law Junie and sisters and brothers Patricia, Bernadette, Cheryl, Odette, Zeldia, Earl, and Asbert, many friends and his National Guard family.

The Gospel of John, Chapter 15, Verse 13 states that "Greater love than this has no man, but that he lay down his life for his friends." SFC Lake and his comrades have done just that.

God lent us a wonderful gift in the life of SFC Lake. He now returns to his loving embrace.

We honor him and thank him for his sacrifice. May he rest in God's eternal peace.

CONGRATULATING LIBERTY HILL
HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the success and achievements of Liberty Hill High School in Liberty Hill, Texas. In particular, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Liberty Hill High School Panthers football team, who were the Division II, Class AAA champions this year. Winning the championship was an appropriate end to a great year for the Panthers and was very much deserved. Liberty Hill has long been recognized as a school dedicated to academic success, and with this feat they have shown that their prowess extends to the athletic fields as well.

Liberty Hill High School is an example of what a school can achieve with hard work and dedication. I admire what they do to positively mold their student-athletes into model citizens. I am very proud and honored to represent the Panther football team and all of Liberty Hill High School. I wish them congratulations and continued success in their future endeavors.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

TRIBUTE TO CARMEN SALINAS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Carmen Salinas on her work representing Mexico as Señora Internacional during the Washington Birthday Celebration, which is the largest celebration of its kind in the United States.

Mrs. Carmen Salinas was born on September 4, 1933, in the City of Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico. Her early steps in the arts were marked by her strong desire to give the public a great performance. In 1964, Mrs. Salinas worked in television under the direction of Mr. Ernesto Alonzo in the productions of "La Vecindad," "La Frontera," "Sublime Redencion," and "El Chofer." Her theatrical work includes productions of "Cada Quien Su Vida," "Vine, Vi y Mejor Me Fui," but according to critics, her best performance was in "Aprendiendo a Ser Señora."

Mrs. Carmen Salinas' work on the big screen is to be admired. She has starred in big-screen productions including "Distrito Federal," "Paso de Cojo," "Que Viva Tepito," "Danzon," "Albures Mexicanos," and "Nos Reimos de la Migra," among many others. Her performances in the small screen include super hits such as "Abrazame Muy Fuerte," "Preciosa," "Mi Pequeña Traviesa," and "Maria Mercedes." She is also recognized as a successful entrepreneur, particularly for her theatrical presentation "Aventurera," one of Mexico's most popular theatrical productions in recent history, which also has been featured in many cities in the United States with great crossover appeal.

She was recently honored in New York by the A.C.E. Awards, and also received the "Palmas de Oro" award. The Hispanic community is proud to consider Mrs. Carmen Salinas as one of its most influential role models.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the dedication of Carmen Salinas to the Hispanic-American community in the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT: FEBRUARY 1, 2007.

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, I am introducing legislation to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act, MMPA, to remove the requirement in the act for commercial fisheries "to further reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals to an insignificant level approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate," which is commonly referred to as the "Zero Mortality Rate Goal."

Congress enacted the MMPA in 1972, in part, to address the high mortality rate of marine mammals occurring in the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. In response to these high mor-

ality levels, Congress created a zero mortality rate goal for this fishery. At the time, Congress was very specific in how this goal should be applied to the fishery. The goal was not to shut down fisheries, but reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury rate of marine mammals. In this case, once the Secretary of Commerce was satisfied that the tuna fishermen were using the best available technology to assure minimal hazards to marine mammal populations, the goal of a reduced mortality rate was met. This standard also allowed the Secretary to take into account the economic and technological practicability of the best available technology.

In the 1980s, Congress reaffirmed the intent of zero mortality rate goal. Congress recognized the progress made by the purse seine fishery to reduce its mortality rates and maintained the technology standard for this fishery. The 1981 House Report stated zero mortality rate goal "is satisfied . . . by a continuation of the application of the best marine mammal safety techniques and equipment that are economically and technologically practicable."

It wasn't until the 1990s that Congress applied dolphin mortality limits to the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery. These limits were based on the International Dolphin Conservation Act of 1992 and the International Dolphin Conservation Program Act of 1997. It is important to note that the mortality limits established in the 1992 act were based on reductions that could be achieved by the gear currently being used in the fishery.

For other fisheries, Congress maintained the zero mortality rate goal as a means to promote new technology to reduce the incidental taking of marine mammals. In the 1994 Marine Mammal Protection Act amendments, Congress created a new fishery regime which authorized limited incidental takes of marine mammals in commercial fisheries and retained the economic and technological practicability finding. In section 118, which guides the take reduction plan process, it specifically states "The long-term goal of the plan shall be to reduce, within 5 years of its implementation, the incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals incidentally taken in the course of commercial fishing operations to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate, taking into account the economics of the fishery, the availability of existing technology and existing state or regional fishery management plans."

In 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, was sued by a number of environmental groups for not complying with the requirements of section 118, and as part of the settlement NMFS was required to define the zero mortality rate goal. NMFS established a threshold level for mortality and serious injury that would meet this requirement. NMFS defined an Insignificance Threshold in regulations and estimated this threshold level as 10 percent of the "Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level."

The MMPA has a number of guiding principles to assist in the protection of marine mammals. The overall goal of the Act is to maintain or restore marine mammal populations to their Optimum Sustainable Population. Another is the potential biological removal level, PBR, for a marine mammal stock which is defined as the "maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from a marine mammal stock

while allowing that stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population." When calculating PBR the agency takes into account all activities with incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals. However, the fishing industry is the only industry required to take on the burden of reducing the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals through a take reduction team process.

Commercial fisherman do not want to kill marine mammals. They want to harvest fish. Fisherman have been willing participants and in some cases leaders in the research and development of gear to reduce interactions with marine mammals. In addition, the take reduction team process, with the help of commercial fishermen, has been successful in reducing interactions between fisheries and marine mammals. However, I believe the requirement for commercial fisheries to reduce their level of interactions with marine mammals to a level of 10 percent of PBR is overly burdensome.

For that reason, I am proposing this legislation which will remove the zero mortality rate goal from the act. It will retain the requirement for commercial vessel owners or operators to report all incidental mortality and injury of marine mammals during the course of a commercial fishery. Fisheries will continue to be listed as category I, II, or III based on the level of marine mammal mortality and injury occurring in the fishery. The Secretary will still be required to establish take reduction teams and develop take reduction plans to reduce the level of marine mammal mortality and serious injury to levels below PBR in commercial fisheries around the Nation.

This is common sense conservation legislation that should be enacted by this Congress.

RECOGNIZING JEREMY CHRISTIAN TYLER CRUZ FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam, Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376 and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the years Jeremy has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Jeremy's dedication to his community is outstanding. He has received the World Conservation Award, the 12 Month Camper Award (four times), the 100 Nights Camper Award, and also planned and supervised the expansion of the main picnic shelter at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary in Liberty, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIREMAN AND
DRIVER BRIAN COX**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Brian Cox for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the city of Denton, TX.

Mr. Brian Cox has recently been honored Firefighter of the Year for his leadership in the Denton Fire Department and the Denton Firefighter's Association. As a driver, his top priority is getting the fire team safely to the scene unharmed. Among his many duties, Mr. Cox also stays with the engine to ensure that water is pumped from the fire hydrant to the fire, while the remaining firefighters take charge of the fire inside the burning buildings. For the past 4 months he has willingly stepped in for a fellow injured officer and took upon himself the role of captain at station 3 on the C shift. A natural leader, Mr. Cox has aspirations of becoming a captain in the future and looks forward to taking charge of his own fire station.

A native of Denton, TX, Mr. Brian Cox graduated from Denton High School, after which he served in the Navy as a firefighter for 6 years. He is active in the Denton Firefighters Association, which works with city officials on the contract that allows negotiation with the city on fire-related issues. Mr. Cox is not only a loyal and modest fireman, but also a devoted husband to his wife, Triniki Cox, and loving father to their three children.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Brian Cox for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, TX. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

**TRIBUTE TO MR. PERCY SUTTON—
DESIGNATING THE FACILITY OF
THE UNITED STATES POSTAL
SERVICE LOCATED AT 365 WEST
125TH STREET IN NEW YORK,
NEW YORK, AS THE “PERCY
SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILD-
ING”**

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Percy Sutton, a true leader in the Harlem community. He has worked as a stunt pilot, train conductor, military intelligence officer, civil rights attorney, broadcast company owner, TV producer, and borough president. But Sutton is most notably known as a mentor for young leaders in my congressional district.

Percy Sutton was born in San Antonio, TX on November 24, 1920, the youngest child of Samuel and Lillian Sutton's 15 children. Sutton attended and graduated from Prairie View A&M University, Tuskegee Institute, and Hampton Institute. A skilled pilot, Sutton served our country during World War II with

the Tuskegee Airmen and won combat stars as an intelligence officer.

After receiving an honorable discharge with the rank of captain, Sutton enrolled in the Brooklyn College Law School and received his law degree in 1950. During the 1950s and 1960s, Sutton became one of America's best known lawyers, fighting for civil rights and representing many prominent African American figures, including Malcolm X.

Sutton served as borough president of the borough of Manhattan from 1966 until 1977. During his tenure he supported initiatives to forge economic revitalization in Harlem. It was Sutton, while borough president, who first presented the idea of tourism in upper Manhattan. He continues to encourage the revitalization of the Harlem community by supporting organizations which promote local empowerment and economic development.

Sutton is also a leader in the business world. In 1971, he created the Inner City Broadcasting Company. The company housed the first African American owned radio stations in New York City: WBLS and WLIB. Sutton initiated the revitalization of the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem and successfully produced the nationally acclaimed television show, *It's Showtime at the Apollo*. In 1987, he went on to receive the Spingarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, for his many achievements as a public servant, businessman, and community leader.

Percy Sutton is a great American and a good friend. He continues to be an inspiration for young African Americans. I urge you to support H.R. 954 to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, NY, as the “Percy Sutton Post Office Building.”

IN HONOR OF LT. COL. DAVID C.
CANEGATA III**HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN**

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of a family man, a soldier, and a friend, LTC David C. Canegata III who was killed in Iraq on January 20 when the Black Hawk helicopter in which he and 11 of his colleagues were flying went down over Baghdad.

My district, the U.S. Virgin Islands mourned the loss of Lieutenant Colonel Canegata and his fellow Virgin Islander SFC Floyd Lake for they were among the best and brightest of our National Guardsmen who have served their country faithfully in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba since the onset of hostilities on September 11.

The gospel of John, Chapter 15, Verse 13 states that “Greater love than this has no man, but that he lay down his life for his friends.” Lieutenant Colonel Canegata, who was a man of faith, has given us the greatest gift of all, the gift of love, through his service and sacrifice.

I knew David, or “Tershie” as he was affectionately called, since his early childhood as our families were close and his cousins were my best friends and so his passing is a very painful, personal loss.

David left a wonderful legacy of devotion to family, community, the National Guard, and his church. In his short life, he touched the lives of many in different parts of the world, but more than anything else, he was a father, who while giving his all to his own, extended his nurturing and love to the young people of his church and community. His brothers and sisters in arms, his National Guard family, remember him as a source of strength and inspiration and leadership.

On behalf of my family, staff, and the Congress of the United States, I extend our heartfelt sympathy and eternal gratitude to his wife, Shenneth, his parents David and Carmen, his children Nicole, David-Mychal, Andre, and Jessica, his siblings Diane, Terry, Yvette, and John, the entire Canegata clan, Speak the Word Ministries and his National Guard family. His life, and the loving, caring man of God that he became is a beautiful and enduring tribute to you, the family that nurtured him.

We all loved him, but now he is with the One who can love him more perfectly than we ever could.

David fought, defended, and protected us in war, but he was a man of peace. We honor him, we thank him, and we will never forget him, his ultimate sacrifice and the love he gave in the most profound way to all of us.

May he rest in Eternal Peace.

RECOGNIZING GREGORY DANIEL
BEDSAUL FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Gregory Daniel Bedsaul, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Gregory has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Gregory has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Gregory Daniel Bedsaul for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING COPPERAS
COVE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL
TEAM**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding achievements of Copperas Cove High School in Copperas Cove, Texas. Copperas Cove High School has long been recognized as an institution that places a premium on academic success. Recently,

Copperas Cove added to their successes with a commendable performance by the Bulldawg football team, who advanced to the state championship game in 4A Division I. This marks the first time Copperas Cove has played for a state championship in any division and is the fruit of a season marked by hard work and dedication.

Copperas Cove High School has shown what a school can achieve with no small amount of persistence. I am sure that in addition to the achievements of this season they will have an even brighter future. I admire what they do both athletically and academically; I am proud to represent such a fine institution and wish them the best in their future endeavors. I would like to congratulate them on their efforts this season, and their well-deserved success.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL RODRIGUEZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Paul Rodriguez on representing the United States as Señor Internacional during the Washington Birthday Celebration, the largest celebration of its kind in the United States.

Mr. Rodriguez's career has spanned more than two decades and includes starring roles in over 30 films and countless television series and specials. Some of Mr. Paul Rodriguez's series include "Trial and Error," "Grand Slam," and for over four years he hosted "El Show de Paul Rodriguez," an entertainment talk show for the Spanish-language Univision network. This particular show reached an international audience throughout the United States and 17 other countries in Central and South America.

His directorial debut came in 1994 with the film "A Million to Juan," a family comedy in which he also wrote and starred. Mr. Rodriguez moved nicely from television to motion pictures, making his feature film debut in the picture comedy "D.C. Cab," followed by many films such as "Miracles," "Born in East L.A.," and "Made in America." Mr. Rodriguez recently had the opportunity to work with the legendary Clint Eastwood in the film "Bloodwork." It is estimated that Mr. Paul Rodriguez has performed live to well to over one million concert goers from coast to coast. Within Hispanic communities, Mr. Rodriguez is considered the "Original Latin King of Comedy."

Mr. Paul Rodriguez remains strongly rooted in the Latino Community, working with civic and educational groups, and his main contributions go to The National Hispanic Scholarship Fund (NHSF), but he also contributes to such charitable efforts such as Comic Relief, and hosts the annual Elizabeth Glaser Pediatrics AIDS Foundation Celebrity Golf Tournament. Mr. Rodriguez is the one of the few stand-up comedians who performs in two languages (Spanish/English) and was voted as one of the most influential Hispanics in America. He has also been the recipient of the Ruben Salazar Award by the National Council of La Raza.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the dedication of Paul

Rodriguez to the Hispanic-American community in the United States.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENTS: FEBRUARY, 2007

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, Congressman HENRY BROWN (R-SC) and I are introducing legislation today that will extend the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program. The program was first authorized in 2000 to address the funding needs of facilities assisting the National Marine Fisheries Service with the recovery and rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals. The Prescott Grant Program has been very successful in supporting facilities around the nation volunteering facility space and staff time to rehabilitate marine mammals and return many of them to the wild. For those animals that cannot be returned to the wild, due to illness or other factors, the facilities have taken on the responsibility of caring for those marine mammals.

This legislation will increase the funding for the Department of Commerce from \$4.0 million up to \$6.0 million a year. The bill will cap administrative costs and roll over any unused funds into the grant program to be issued as grants in the following fiscal year. The Administration is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to respond at-sea to marine mammals entangled in floating debris. It will create an emergency assistance process through which the agency will be able to enter into cooperative agreements with stranding facilities to facilitate the movement of funds to facilities responding to stranding events. In addition, the legislation will reauthorize funding for the Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Event Fund, which allows the agency to respond to mass stranding events and reimburse facilities that have assisted in the response activity.

I applaud the public display facilities and marine mammal research institutions that have dedicated resources and time toward recovering and rehabilitating marine mammals. This legislation will allow the National Marine Fisheries Service and the stranding facilities to continue their important efforts in the future. I urge support for this important conservation measure.

RECOGNIZING BLAKE ALEXANDER MCCARTER FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Blake Alexander McCarter, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Blake has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Blake has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Blake Alexander McCarter for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIREMAN CLINT STEPHENSON

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Fireman Clint Stephenson for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the city of Denton, Texas.

Mr. Clint Stephenson has recently been named Rookie of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. Mr. Stephenson never fails to put forth a positive attitude and he is continually respectful to his fellow firemen in the department. He pays close attention to detail during both station duties and on-scene care, leaving no room for error and helping others in need. Not only is he a dedicated and compassionate firefighter, but he is also a loyal coworker and friend.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Clint Stephenson for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FOR WINNING THE 2007 CARIBBEAN SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate, Las Águilas Cibaerñas, the team representing the Dominican Republic at the 2007 Caribbean Series, for winning the championship on February 7. Wearing jerseys emblazoned with the words "Dominicano Soy" (I am Dominican), their pride in their country and in the game of baseball was evident as the team dominated this year's Caribbean Series, where they won a record five of their six games during the Series. Dominicans have once more demonstrated that they are the forerunners in the all-American sport of baseball. The Dominican Republic has now won 16 Caribbean Series titles, the most by anyone country in the history of these championship games. The Dominican Republic has won seven out of the last 11 Caribbean Series, demonstrating their passion and commitment to the sport.

Baseball is the national sport of the Dominican Republic and many of the best Dominican born baseball athletes play for U.S. Major League Baseball teams. Even in the poorest rural villages throughout the Dominican Republic, boys are swinging bats in well-tended baseball fields. They move with an athletic grace and throw without fear. They play barefoot sometimes, and swing with the entire body in one fluid poetic arc. They practice day in and day out with hopes of one day being the baseball player. They play for the love of the game, which is why professional baseball scouts from the United States go to the Dominican Republic in droves.

About 500,000 Dominicans live in New York, the city's second-largest Latino group after Puerto Ricans, according to census officials. The majority of New York's Dominicans live in and around Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan, part of my Congressional district. Baseball is a year-round sport for them. In the winter, after the baseball season finishes in the United States, they enjoy the Dominican baseball season, which includes the Caribbean Series games. This year the Series was watched by over 700,000 fans all over the world, the highest viewing ever.

Please join me in congratulating the team from the Dominican Republic for an outstanding demonstration of commitment, dominance and pride at the 2007 Caribbean Series.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

SPEECH OF

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 134, recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation. I would like to commend my colleagues, Congressman CARNEY and Congressman BILIRAKIS for their leadership in bringing this resolution to the floor today.

As an original member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I know firsthand the many challenges within the Department of Homeland Security. Last week, the committee conducted hearings on the status and budget of the agency. A concern that was expressed by a majority, if not all members of the committee, was the issue of employee moral at the agency. We know that it has not been easy to withstand and respond to the harsh and constant criticism resulting from the aftermath of 911 and other disasters that followed.

But, today, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize all of the DHS employees, especially those within FEMA who have had to bear the brunt of criticisms post-Katrina. Although this committee has conducted oversight hearings to address these criticisms, we also recognize and know firsthand all the good work that they do. In addition to supporting all that H. Res. 134 provides, I would also like to add that as the members of this committee begin the appropriation process, we will do everything possible to make sure that they have

the resources they need to continue to effectively and efficiently get their job done.

Congratulations to the Department of Homeland Security on their fourth anniversary.

RECOGNIZING JAMES JOSEPH ARCANO FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize James Joseph Arcano, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

James has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years James has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending James Joseph Arcano for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF TRAINING CAPTAIN BRAD LAHART

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Training Captain Brad Lahart for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the City of Denton, Texas.

Captain Lahart has recently been named Employee of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. As Training Captain, he ensures that all firefighters have proper training and certification, and works with the victim's assistance program to help victims of fires and other disasters. Mr. Lahart was project manager for Station 7, and is currently managing the construction of a new fire and police training center to be built at the Station 7 site. He has greatly contributed to the tripling of the department's documented training hours, which the firefighters need to retain their certification.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Brad Lahart for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING LEO T. MCCARTHY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and fellow Californian,

Leo T. McCarthy, who passed away February 5, 2007. A devoted public servant, Mr. McCarthy dedicated his life to serving his country and the people of the State of California.

During his long career of service to our Nation, Mr. McCarthy distinguished himself as a fierce advocate for economic justice, social equality, and freedom for all. Joining the United States Air Force in 1951, he served with distinction and honor during the Korean War. From there, Mr. McCarthy entered into public life and was elected as the youngest member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in city history. Soon after, he was elected to the California State Assembly, and quickly rose to become Speaker of the Assembly. As Speaker, he championed the causes of human rights, education, and environmentalism, securing major legislative victories while bringing more openness and transparency to the process.

Mr. McCarthy's tremendous record in the Assembly catapulted him to prominence and he was elected Lieutenant Governor of California in 1982. A brilliant executive, he expertly coordinated the relief effort for the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. Recognizing his service, the people of California returned him to office for a record breaking three terms until he retired from politics in 1994. Even in retirement, he remained engaged in the lives of Californians, raising over one million dollars to endow the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at the University of California of San Francisco.

In addition to his dedicated public service, he was devoted to his family. Even while serving in Sacramento at the very top of California politics, he drove home almost every night to be with his wife, Jacqueline, and his children, Sharon, Conna, Adam, and Niall.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the very best that the State of California has to offer in Leo T. McCarthy. He was a leader, a statesman, and he will be sorely missed.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND SUPPORTING AND RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEM- BRANCE

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 19, we will mark the 65th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This resolution authorized the internment of over one hundred thousand American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese, German, and Italian ancestry. At the hands of our government, Japanese, German, and Italian citizens suffered grievous violations of their civil liberties. These war-time measures were far-reaching, uprooting entire communities and targeting citizens as well as resident aliens.

Although the greatest numbers of those impacted by Executive Order 9066 were Japanese-Americans, little is known about the impact of the measure on Italian and German-

Americans. Like Japanese-Americans, Italian and German-Americans were branded "enemy aliens" and were required to carry identification cards, saddled with travel restrictions, had their personal property seized, and placed in internment. For example, 3,200 resident aliens of Italian background were arrested and more than 300 of them were interned. About 11,000 German residents—including some naturalized citizens—were arrested and more than 5,000 were interned.

Executive Order 9066 was finally rescinded by Gerald Ford on April 19, 1976 and in 1983, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) concluded that the incarceration of Japanese-Americans had not been justified by military necessity. Rather, the report determined that the decision to incarcerate was based on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." The Civil Liberties Act of 1988, based on the CWRIC recommendations, was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan and an appropriations bill authorizing reparations to be paid between 1990 and 1998 was signed by George H.W. Bush in 1989. Finally, in 1990, surviving internees began to receive individual redress payments and a letter of apology. Through these acts, our government has attempted to make amends, yet the initial effects of Executive Order 9066 remain in the hearts and minds of many Americans.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Italian-American Delegation, I fully support H. Res. 122, which would effectively recognize the significance of the 65th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and support the goals of the Japanese-American, German-American, and Italian-American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance. This bill will go a long way in helping to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately I was unable to cast my votes on the following rollcall votes on February 12, 2007. I request that the RECORD state my intentions on these votes had I been present to vote.

On rollcall No. 93—on the motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H. Res. 134, recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall No. 94—on the motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H. Con. Res. 44, honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND SUPPORTING AND RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, February 19th marks the 65th anniversary of one of the greatest mistakes in our country's long history.

On that day in 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of tens of thousands of Japanese Americans. This executive order was also applied to a smaller group of Americans of both Italian and German descent.

In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the internments, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 122. This resolution supports the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance for those individuals who were unjustly imprisoned.

It is said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. A National Day of Remembrance would increase public awareness of the events surrounding the internment of innocent Americans and their families.

While our society has made important strides towards ending racial discrimination and inequality in the 65 years since President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, we still have a long road ahead of us.

Just last week, alarming statistics were released on the resurgence of the KKK and other hate groups in the United States.

This is why we must pass this resolution. Our government and our leaders cannot make the mistakes of the past. Instead they must guide us to a greater understanding and respect for all Americans.

WELCOME TO SPEAKER OF THE KYRGYZ PARLIAMENT, MR. MARAT SULTANOV

HON. CHRIS CANNON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I rise to welcome to the United States and to my State of Utah the Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament, Mr. Marat Sultanov. Mr. Sultanov was hosted by leaders in Utah on February 3–5.

Kyrgyzstan is a small nation in the heart of Central Asia, landlocked and inhabited primarily by a Muslim population with a predominantly nomadic culture and heritage. Kyrgyzstan has demonstrated itself a friend and ally of the United States, especially in the fight against terrorism. The air base at the Manas International Airport in Bishkek is still the only military base in Central Asia supporting coalition forces operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan.

For some time the Kyrgyz Republic has been considered an advanced nation in terms

of political and economic transformation. After the change of regime in 2005 and the election of a new president, Kyrgyzstan still faces many challenges. One great challenge for this nation stems from its proximity to Afghanistan, and the threat of increasing drug trafficking, weapons smuggling and radical militancy. Kyrgyzstan needs our support to progress with reforms for a better future for its citizens.

During his visit to the United States, and Utah in particular, Speaker Sultanov talked about those matters. His background and political career show his own contributions to the promotion of market-based economic reforms. Before his election to the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, he was head of the National Bank and the Minister of Finances.

Speaker Sultanov's visit to Utah came at the invitation of Utah Senate President John Valentine, as a result of the Speaker's special interest in building strong, direct ties between the legislators of Kyrgyzstan and the legislature of Utah, as well as with the U.S. Congress.

While in Utah, Speaker Sultanov lectured at Utah Valley State College on the subject of "The Kyrgyz Republic-Utah-Rocky Mountain States: A new level of cooperation through a sustainable Mountain Partnership." The Speaker will emphasize for the first time a new tack in the bilateral agenda, related to cooperation in the sphere of sustainable mountain development, which will be very important for both Kyrgyzstan and Utah.

The idea of sustainable development is directed toward fighting poverty, unemployment and inequality by looking for the exchange and implementation of best practices among the people who live in similar environments with similar challenges. Many of these challenges in mountain nations come because of remoteness, lack of resources and infrastructure.

The Rocky Mountain States and Utah are actively involved in this cooperative process. In November of last year several institutions from this region, including Vista 360 (Jackson, Wyoming), Utah Valley State College and the Utah-Russia Institute became members of the UN-related Mountain Partnership, which coordinates efforts on sustainable mountain development on a global level.

Another major project which Utah Valley State College is pursuing, together with its partners from the National Center of Development of Mountain Regions of Kyrgyzstan, is the international conference "Women of the Mountains." A number of prominent women from around the world and from the Rocky Mountain region will take part in the Conference. The goal of the Conference is to unite leading scholars and institutions from the Rocky Mountain States in a regional approach toward sustainable mountain development. This conference will be free and open to the public on the UVSC Orem campus from March 8th–March 10th.

The conference will give scholars from the region an opportunity to talk to each other and identify positive examples of sustainable development in the Rocky Mountains and then to further these experiences both in this region and with interested partners around the world. UVSC intends that the Conference be held on an annual basis.

Representatives of Kyrgyzstan and other developing mountain nations have emphasized how important it is for them to have specific support from the mountain communities of

the United States. The historical development of the mountainous states in North America, and Utah in particular, are of particular interest to them. The new involvement and interest of the Rocky Mountain States and Utah in sustainable mountain development could help many of the transitioning economies to develop and implement more successful, pro-market policies.

This is a rewarding and noble goal, especially now, when we are witnessing growing challenges to stability and development around the world from the growth of poverty and unemployment, two primary sources feeding terrorism and militancy.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Industrial Hemp Farming Act. The Industrial Hemp Farming Act requires the Federal Government to respect State laws allowing the growing of industrial hemp.

Seven States—Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, and West Virginia—allow industrial hemp production or research in accord with State laws. However, Federal law is standing in the way of farmers in these States growing what may be a very profitable crop. Because of current federal law, all hemp included in products sold in the United States must be imported instead of being grown by American farmers.

Since 1970, the Federal Controlled Substances Act's inclusion of industrial hemp in the schedule one definition of marijuana has prohibited American farmers from growing industrial hemp despite the fact that industrial hemp has such a low content of THC (the psychoactive chemical in the related marijuana plant) that nobody can be psychologically affected by consuming hemp. Federal law concedes the safety of industrial hemp by allowing it to be legally imported for use as food.

The United States is the only industrialized nation that prohibits industrial hemp cultivation. The Congressional Research Service has noted that hemp is grown as an established agricultural commodity in over 30 nations in Europe, Asia, and North America. My Industrial Hemp Farming Act will relieve this unique restriction on American farmers and allow them to grow industrial hemp in accord with State law.

Industrial hemp is a crop that was grown legally throughout the United States for most of our Nation's history. In fact, during World War II, the Federal Government actively encouraged American farmers to grow industrial hemp to help the war effort. The Department of Agriculture even produced a film "Hemp for Victory" encouraging the plant's cultivation.

In recent years, the hemp plant has been put to many popular uses in foods and in industry. Grocery stores sell hemp seeds and oil as well as food products containing oil and seeds from the hemp plant. Industrial hemp is also included in consumer products such as paper, cloths, cosmetics, and carpet. One of the more innovative recent uses of industrial hemp is in the door frames of about 1.5 million

cars. Hemp has even been used in alternative automobile fuel.

It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has stood in the way of American farmers, including many who are struggling to make ends meet, competing in the global industrial hemp market. Indeed, the founders of our Nation, some of whom grew hemp, would surely find that Federal restrictions on farmers growing a safe and profitable crop on their own land are inconsistent with the constitutional guarantee of a limited, restrained Federal Government. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to stand up for American farmers and cosponsor the Industrial Hemp Farming Act.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MOUNT VERNON RECREATION CENTER

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Alexandria, Virginia on receiving the Heart of Potomac West Award.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center has been a key partner in the Del Ray Potomac West community of Alexandria for decades. The Center's staff has built long-lasting relationships with the community, including neighbors, businesses, and visitors, by ensuring that the Center's doors are open and that every community member is welcome.

Each year, the Center staff helps to organize and assist with numerous events for the residents and businesses of Del Ray. These include the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting, the Annual Halloween Parade, Art on the Avenue, Cinema Del Ray, First Night on New Year's Eve, and countless programs for seniors and youth.

Without the support of these dedicated, hardworking, and caring staff members, such events could never take place.

The staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center has stood side by side with the community during times of crisis. When Del Ray lost two of its citizens, Kevin Shifflet and Nancy Dunning, the Center staff acted as a support beacon for a community in mourning, providing a home where citizens turned for comfort and support. These devoted and committed staffers have always gone far above and beyond the call of duty.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center is a marvelous asset of the City of Alexandria, and this has occurred through the hard work and dedication of the Center staff. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Center staff on being awarded this great honor.

TRIBUTE TO CLERK OF THE HOUSE KAREN HAAS

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to rise and show my appreciation for Karen Haas, the outgoing Clerk of the House.

Karen is truly deserving of recognition for a job very well done.

It is a pleasure to know Karen, as she is one of the most thoughtful and considerate people on Capitol Hill. She has done an exceptional job running the Clerk's office, and knowing that Karen was in charge meant other members and I knew that things were getting done right.

I can even say that I have had the privilege to "work" for Karen. When Karen ran the House floor operations, I would get calls at all times of the day asking if I could preside. I never hesitated to preside when Karen asked, nor did my colleagues.

Some people might have been surprised when Speaker HASTERT tapped Karen to fill the Clerk's position. I wasn't surprised; I knew he made a very good choice.

Karen has done a magnificent job as Clerk and we will truly miss having her in the Capitol. Karen, thank you for a job well done.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT AID REWARD ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today along with Representative THOMAS PETRI to introduce the Student Aid Reward Act of 2007, the STAR Act, a bill that is a vital part of strengthening America's middle class.

Since 2001, tuition and fees at public colleges and universities have exploded, increasing by 41 percent—after inflation. Students are graduating with greater amounts of debt than ever before, and unfortunately as many as 200,000 prospective students each year decide not to go to college because they can't afford it.

Already in this Congress we have taken great strides toward making a college education affordable for all qualified students through increased grant aid and more affordable student loans.

The Student Aid Reward Act continues the mission of putting students and families first by providing additional need-based grant aid to students without any cost to the taxpayer.

This legislation is simple: It encourages colleges to use the less expensive of the federal government's two student loan programs, and puts the savings back into the hands of students through need-based grant aid.

In order to do this, the Student Aid Reward Act calls on the Secretary of Education to determine which of the two Federally backed student loan programs is more efficient. Schools that elect to use the more efficient program would then be rewarded with additional scholarship funds for and graduate fellowship money for low- and middle-income students—all paid for by the savings generated by the bill.

According to the President's recently released 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive program in 2007 cost \$3 more for every \$100 lent than the same loans made with U.S. Treasury funds.

At a time when our Federal Government is facing an extreme deficit, this is a win-win bill

for students, families, and taxpayers. This bill will not only increase efficiency in the loan programs, but will also generate increased competition, resulting in increased benefits for students and families.

The Student Aid Reward Act has also been introduced in the Senate by Senators EDWARD KENNEDY and GORDON SMITH.

No qualified person should ever be prevented from going to college because of the cost. We must ensure that every student in this country has the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT SALUTES FATHER ROBERT DRINAN

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, last week, several of my colleagues and I memorialized the life and record of the late Father Robert Drinan, one of the most distinguished people to have served in this body. Father Drinan's political career began in 1970 when he ran for Congress as an opponent of American participation in the Vietnam War. He was a consistent fighter for peace throughout his life. When I returned to my district last weekend, I received from Father Drinan's sister-in-law, Helen Drinan, a woman who played a very important role in nurturing his political career, a copy of a letter she had received that meant a great deal to her and the Drinan family.

The letter is from the Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States, hailing Father Drinan "as a tenacious advocate for social justice and a resilient fighter for peace." Madam Speaker, I ask that this letter from the Government of Vietnam to the Drinan family be printed here.

EMBASSY OF VIETNAM,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2007.

Mrs. HELEN DRINAN,
Newton, MA.

DEAR MRS. DRINAN, On behalf of the people and Government of Vietnam, I would like to extend the most profound condolences to you and to your family on the passing of your brother-in-law, Father and Congressman Robert F. Drinan.

Father Robert F. Drinan will be always remembered by many as a tenacious advocate for social justice and a resilient fighter for peace. For the Vietnamese people, he will remain a staunch fighter who made significant contribution to ending to the Vietnam War in the 1970s, thus bringing peace to the country after so many decades of wars.

May your family overcome this most difficult time.

Respectfully,

NGUYEN TAM CHIEN,
Ambassador.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT AID REWARD (STAR) ACT OF 2007

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today I am again joining with my colleague, Chairman

GEORGE MILLER, to reintroduce our Student Aid Reward (STAR) Act, which would provide billions of dollars in additional aid to students at no additional cost to taxpayers. Now, more than ever, millions of low and middle-income families are struggling to help their children attend college in the face of rising tuition costs and limited financial assistance. The STAR Act is a fiscally-responsible plan that could help make college more affordable and accessible for these students.

The STAR Act is rooted in my longstanding belief that we have a fundamental obligation to our constituents to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in government spending wherever it exists. Our legislation would encourage colleges and universities to utilize the less expensive of the federal government's two main student loan programs. In doing so, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the STAR Act would save taxpayers \$13.4 billion in wasteful subsidies—which would instead be devoted to increase student aid to low and middle-income students who need it most.

The real opportunity in this legislation is that it would allow for an increased investment in education while not costing taxpayers a single penny more. In fact, under the STAR program, there would be enough savings not only to return half to schools that switch to the more cost-effective program, but also to provide an additional 25 percent of those savings to schools that were previously enrolled in the cost-effective program and thus already saving taxpayers money. The final 25 percent would be devoted towards deficit reduction.

All these savings are to be made possible due to the startling difference in the cost between the two federal student loan programs. For the current fiscal year, the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program costs more than the exact same loan administered under the Direct Loan (DL) program. According to President Bush's 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive program in 2007 cost \$3 more for every \$100 lent than the same loans made with U.S. Treasury funds.

Beyond the Office of Management and Budget, other budget experts continue to confirm this cost difference. Earlier this week, the Congressional Budget Office released a score that projected savings from this amendment in the amount of \$13.4 billion over the next 10 years—and that's if only 15 percent of colleges choose to participate in the Student Aid Reward program by switching from the FFEL to the DL program. Those savings would be even more substantial with increased participation.

It is important to note that the STAR Act would not mandate that schools select the most cost-effective program, although we hope that they would. Under this bill, each college retains their ability to choose their student loan program. Those who choose to be more responsible with taxpayers money would be rewarded with a portion of the savings. Those that decide to continue with the more expensive program face no penalties, other than a missed opportunity to use taxpayer savings to boost their students' Pell Grants. Furthermore, each school would have the choice to leave the STAR program at the end of their 5-year contract if they are not satisfied with the results for their students.

A critical component of this program is that it is budget neutral. Any reward payments to

schools are contingent upon actual taxpayer savings that year. We are confident that these savings not only exist, but amount to several billion dollars annually. Both the CBO and OMB continue to confirm this year after year.

The overarching reason that the FFEL program is so much more expensive than the DL program is the excessive subsidies paid to lenders each year to issue loans. As all lenders are guaranteed the exact same subsidies, regardless of their costs and efficiency, lenders do not compete for the benefit of taxpayers, only among themselves for market share. This practice is not only unnecessary but it is irresponsible—especially when the DL program has no similar costs.

The taxpayers not only pay interest subsidies to private lenders, they also subsidize the 13 guaranty agencies that purchase loans from the lenders after a certain period of time has passed. This is also a wasteful practice—especially when the DL program has no similar cost.

I would like to reiterate that this legislation would in no way mandate that schools choose the DL program over the FFEL program, or even that the DL program will always necessarily be the most cost-effective program. Instead, the legislation stipulates that the Secretary of Education shall determine each year which program is most cost-effective to taxpayers and that schools who participate in that program receive some of the savings. The Secretary would do this by making use of the best data available each year.

Madam Speaker, I believe that as stewards of taxpayers' money, Congress should always seek to make government more efficient and more accountable. Our legislation is smart policy: voluntary for schools, fiscally-responsible, and would provide over \$10 billion in additional aid over the next 10 years. I encourage my colleagues to join Rep. MILLER and me in cosponsoring this legislation.

RECOGNIZING NICOLE MAYHEW AS SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA'S TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize Nicole Mayhew as Santa Rosa County's Teacher of the Year.

As a native of Northwest Florida, Nicole Mayhew joined the Santa Rosa County School District administration in 1996, after graduating from the University of West Florida with a degree in Primary/Elementary Education. Mrs. Mayhew has proudly served the School District for over 10 years, where she currently teaches first grade at West Navarre Primary School in Navarre, Florida. On January 26, 2007, with her husband Steven and her daughter Erin by her side, Nicole Mayhew was announced Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Mayhew serves as a mentor to beginning teachers and supervises teachers from the University of West Florida. She is a member of the Santa Rosa County, Florida Reading Council and West Navarre Primary School's Parent-Teacher Organization, PTO, an organization of Parents and Teachers that

seeks to increase parent involvement in their child's education.

Out of her passion for teaching and her love for children, Nicole Mayhew sets high standards for all of her students and works with them to achieve their individual goals and the desired results of the overall academic performance of the class. She is the positive force behind each student's growth of mind, by giving them the confidence, knowledge, and inspiration needed to succeed.

The Teacher of the Year recognition highlights one year of teaching, but the proof of greatness lies well beyond the title—it lies in the hearts and minds of the students who have been deeply affected. Through her hard work and dedication, the impact she has had on her students and the community has proven her to be among the great teachers in Northwest Florida, and Santa Rosa County is honored to have her as one of their own.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, I am proud to recognize Nicole Mayhew on this outstanding achievement and her exemplary service in the Santa Rosa County School District.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SOUTH
FLORIDA'S HOLOCAUST DOCU-
MENTATION AND EDUCATION
CENTER

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and pay tribute to all victims of the Holocaust and to congratulate South Florida's Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, its founders and museum curators for their fine work in educating and reminding the public about the Holocaust and remembering and honoring its victims.

An important part of the Center's permanent exhibits is one of only eight authentic World War II railcars that transported Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Nazi death camps.

An estimated 3 million Jews were packed into the cars like the one on display in Hollywood, FL, which has a faded swastika still painted on the side. The persecuted Jews were often kept inside for days without food or water before being murdered. This railcar was used during the world's darkest time when over 6 million Jews were murdered along with approximately 3 million more victims of Nazi aggression, including; Christian Poles, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexual men, and people with disabilities.

This railcar will be placed on an unused track near the Holocaust Museum, which is located in my district at 2031 Harrison Street in Hollywood, FL, the center of the second-largest population of Holocaust survivors in the Nation.

To the residents of South Florida, the students enrolled in area schools, and to the millions of visitors to the region, I encourage you to visit the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center to study, understand and contemplate the consequences of man's inhumanity to man which occurred in Europe prior to and during World War II.

That the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center is one of four Holocaust muse-

ums in the country where these railcars are on display demonstrates that the Jewish community in South Florida is among the strongest in the Nation, forever committed to preserving the memory of the 6 million Jews who tragically were killed during the Shoah.

This railcar will undoubtedly serve as a reminder for eternity that the poignant expression "Never Again" will never ring hollow again.

I congratulate the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center for attaining and displaying this railcar, and for helping to teach the entire South Florida community lessons of tolerance and understanding.

STATEMENT RECOGNIZING FEB-
RUARY AS NATIONAL MARFAN
AWARENESS MONTH

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in observance of February as National Marfan Awareness Month and to recognize the hundreds of thousands of Americans who are living with Marfan syndrome and related connective tissue disorders.

I am proud that the Nation's premier organization supporting the Marfan syndrome community, the National Marfan Foundation, is headquartered in my congressional district in Port Washington, NY. The NMF was founded 25 years ago by Priscilla Ciccariello, a woman of enormous compassion and vision. For the past quarter-century, the NMF has been dedicated to saving lives and improving the quality-of-life for Marfan patients through research, support services, education, and advocacy.

This year marks the 16th observance of National Marfan Awareness Month which is designed to educate the general public and healthcare providers about this challenging condition. Marfan syndrome is a genetic disorder of the connective tissue that can affect many body systems, including; the skeleton, eyes, heart, nervous system, lungs and blood vessels. Of primary concern to patients is the impact the syndrome can have on the aorta. In Marfan patients, the aorta (the large artery that carries blood away from the heart) is weakened and prone to enlargement and rupture, which is often fatal. Currently, there is no cure for Marfan syndrome but with early diagnosis, proper treatment and careful management, patients can live a normal lifespan.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that we are at an unprecedented time of hope in the field of Marfan syndrome research. Just last month, the National, Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at the National Institute of Health, working closely with NMF, initiated a groundbreaking clinical trial on Marfan syndrome. This trial seeks to determine the efficacy of a medication currently used to control high-blood pressure for treating aortic growth in children with Marfan syndrome. The blood-pressure medication has shown a remarkable ability to halt and even reverse aortic growth in pioneering basic research conducted by Dr. Hal Dietz of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. I applaud NHLBI Director Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, and Dr. Gail Pearson, Chief of the NHLBI's Heart Development and

Structural Diseases Branch, for their leadership in supporting this promising trial.

Madam Speaker, February was chosen as National Marfan Awareness Month in part to coincide with Abraham Lincoln's birthday. President Lincoln is believed to have been affected by Marfan syndrome based on the many outward signs of the disorder he portrayed. Marfan syndrome patients are frequently taller than non-affected members of their family and have disproportionately long limbs, fingers and toes. In addition, they often have an indented or protruding chest-bone, curved spine, high-arched palate, and loose joints. Other well known individuals who were afflicted with the Marfan syndrome include Jonathan Larson, the Tony Award winning playwright of the Broadway musical Rent, Flo Hyman, captain of the U.S. Olympic volleyball team that won a gold medal in 1984, Charles de Gaulle, the composer Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninoff, and Mary, Queen of Scots.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 14,000 people die each year of aortic aneurysms and dissections, 20 percent of which can be contributed to genetic disorders such as Marfan syndrome. Unfortunately, a lack of awareness about Marfan syndrome continues to result in patients dying before being properly diagnosed and treated. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me and the National Marfan Foundation in raising awareness of this life-threatening disorder so we can prevent future unnecessary tragedies.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY MCNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in proud support of H.R. 798, which will instruct the General Services Administration to install photovoltaic panels on the roof of the Department of Energy in Washington D.C.

As a country, our energy needs continue to grow, and yet we are still heavily dependent on foreign sources of oil. The Federal Government is the country's single largest energy consumer and is in a unique position to demonstrate a commitment to taking on the challenge of global warming through the use of sustainable energy technology.

The installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the Energy Department headquarters in Washington D.C. is a first—and important—step in that direction. Doing so will help demonstrate the power and promise of solar energy.

It is critical that we continue to push forward on this front and expand the menu of renewable energy solutions available for use. I have recently formed the Bipartisan Freshman Caucus on Energy and Climate and am committed to working with members on both sides of the aisle to move forward with more common-sense solutions like photovoltaic panels. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

HONORING ST. JOSEPH'S OF STRATFORD NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the Reverend Anthony Kopka, members of the congregation, and the Stratford community in extending my sincere congratulations to St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church as they celebrate its 100th Anniversary. This is a remarkable milestone for this community treasure and I am proud to help them celebrate this momentous occasion.

St. Joseph's was first organized in Bridgeport, Connecticut by a group of Polish Catholic immigrants in 1907 and later moved to Stratford, Connecticut after building a new church complex. St. Joseph's was born out of the congregation's desire to exercise more control over their parish. It was important to the Polish congregants that their church be led by a Polish priest, services held in Polish—in all, it was of the utmost importance to the congregants that their ethnic traditions and customs be preserved. In an effort to meet these needs, the Church became a part of the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC)—a denomination which began in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

The PNCC blends traditional Apostolic and Catholic teaching with American democracy which is governed by a constitution patterned after that of the United States. The Church established executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government at national, diocesan, and parish levels. The result is a democratic Catholicism that among other things provides for ownership of parish property by the congregation, a voice and a vote for every member in most matters of the parish, and the election of parish delegates to meet with clergy at synods to elect bishops and determine church policy.

Since its inception in 1907, St. Joseph's has been an integral part of our community and has now grown to its current 300 parish members from 20 different Connecticut communities. Our churches play a vital role in our communities—providing people with a place to turn to for comfort when they are most in need. By strengthening our bonds of faith, St. Joseph's gives its members a place to find their spiritual center and to solidify and support their values. The members of the St. Joseph's have also given much to the City of Bridgeport and the Town of Stratford. Throughout the years, as their membership grew so did their commitment to the enrichment of our community.

For 100 years, the St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church has been a fixture in communities of Bridgeport and Stratford. Through their ministry and outreach efforts, they have left an indelible mark on our community and continue to enrich the lives of others. I am proud to stand today and extend my very best wishes to them as they mark this milestone in their history. Happy 100th Anniversary!

CONGRATULATIONS HELEN GALE FERGUSON ON HER 75TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Helen Gale Ferguson and wish her well on the occasion of her 75th birthday. Helen was born in Newfoundland, Canada in February 1932, where she grew up with her siblings as the daughter of a fisherman and boat builder who sailed the waters of the northern Atlantic.

Upon completion of high school, Helen began working for the U.S. Air Force at Ernest Harmon Air Force Base in Stephenville, Newfoundland. It was there that she met and married Mark E. Ferguson, Jr., during his active duty assignment at the base. Following his honorable discharge from the Air Force, they settled with their children in 1960 in Glen Burnie, Maryland. In 1966, Helen proudly became a U.S. citizen during a ceremony in Annapolis, Maryland. Helen and Mark were married for 41 wonderful years until his passing in 1997.

Helen is the proud mother of four children. Her personal life is one of grace, quiet strength, and love of family. Her values have been passed down to her children, as each of them have chosen a life of service to our Nation. Her daughters Pamela and Patricia both work for the Department of Defense. Her son, David, works for the Department of the Treasury, and her son Mark serves as a Rear Admiral in the United States Navy. Helen is adored by her seven grandchildren Alex, Hannah, Andrew, Eric, Ellie, Ian, and Seth.

Madam Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me in sending our very best to Helen Ferguson on the occasion of her 75th birthday and recognizing her as a role model for her strength, dignity, and support for her family. Coming from a family of immigrants myself, I am particularly proud of her as a role model to all who come to this country from humble beginnings, and contribute to the rich fabric of America.

HONORING MISS GREATER SPRINGFIELD, CARESSA CAMERON

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Caressa Cameron for her year of service to the Miss America Organization and Greater Springfield area.

Ms. Cameron won the title of Miss Greater Springfield 2006 on February 12, 2006. She has worked tirelessly with the Boys and Girls Club to promote her platform of AIDS awareness through behavior modification in the Northern Virginia area.

During her reign, Ms. Cameron made numerous appearances around Springfield, including a gala fundraiser at Greenspring Retirement Community. She also spoke to students at Erving Middle School about "Right Decisions, Right Now," a Miss Virginia program.

Last June, Ms. Cameron competed in the Miss Virginia pageant in Roanoke, VA and placed 2nd runner-up. She was then asked to represent Virginia at the National Miss Sweetheart Pageant in Illinois and placed 4th runner-up to Miss National Sweetheart 2006.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Ms. Cameron for representing the Greater Springfield area with great pride and respect. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on this distinguished title and in wishing her the best of luck in all future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DR. MILTON GORDON

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has been dedicated to higher education and who is a model community servant to my district, Dr. Milton Gordon.

As Chancellor of California State University, Fullerton, Dr. Milton Gordon has been a visionary for the students and faculty as he works to promote higher education for women and minorities.

On February 27th, 2007, Dr. Gordon will be honored by KinderCaminata, a non-profit community organization in Orange County, California that sponsors educational outreach to kindergarten-age children and their families, focusing on promoting literacy, celebrating cultural heritage, and career education. Dr. Gordon will be receiving the "Corazón" Award from KinderCaminata. The tribute is a much deserved honor and should be celebrated by everyone in Orange County, California.

Below are remarks that illustrate Dr. Gordon's outstanding commitment to all the students that Cal State Fullerton seeks to serve. These remarks are taken from Dr. Gordon's report to the University's Latino Faculty and Staff in October 2006:

We are here to strengthen our ties as a community that is working to make learning truly accessible and preeminent to all students and especially to Latino Students.

Cal State Fullerton feels that a large measure of our success is due to our campus outreach efforts and service to the community. While demographic growth has also contributed to the Latino increase, without college readiness programs offered by CSUF, such as Gear Up and ENLACE, the educational obstacles faced by large numbers of Latino students would not have been overcome.

But there is much more we need to do. We need to expand our efforts to work with parents and students in the middle and high schools of the county to increase the number of college ready Latino graduates. We continue to work with colleagues from Fullerton and Santa Ana Colleges to develop a work plan to improve county-wide Latino college readiness programs modeled after the Santa Ana Partnership and its ENLACE Program. We are in the process of creating additional programs in the sciences in collaboration with Fullerton College to increase the transfer of well prepared Latino Students into our Math-based programs in the sciences and engineering. We hope to expand such collaboration with transfer programs to Cal State Fullerton from all Orange County

community college campuses with high Latino enrollment.

We believe that our adhesion to the Cal State Fullerton mission to make this campus a place where "learning is preeminent" and our enforcement of rigorous academic standards have been keys to our success. By serving the learning needs of all students, we serve Latino students; by maintaining high learning expectations, we serve Latino students; by caring for the well-being of our students, we serve Latino students.

An activist community orientation defines the role the university will take in town grown partnerships. Such involvement better informs university personnel of the community's needs. These partnerships must engage students, faculty, staff, and campus administration in university-wide service commitments. The university must be a good neighbor and a good partner.

In working in the Latino community, campus personnel must be culturally aware and mindful of the central role family plays within the culture. We must have a clear and simple outreach message. In providing information on what students need to know to be college ready, make sure you know your audience. Our information must be available in straight-forward language that does not speak down to our audience and written in language understood by parents. We will be developing a Spanish-language campus website and improved, accessible messages in Spanish to reach out to our Latino parents and potential students.

All of the programs and services enumerated above define what it means to be a student-focused institution and are integral to making us a Hispanic Serving Institution in word and deed.

I personally look forward to our continued collaboration to make this a place where all students can be successful and achieve their dreams regardless of race, gender or ethnicity.

I look forward to Dr. Gordon's continued work for Cal State Fullerton and KinderCaminata and it is my pleasure to honor him today.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN VOLLEYBALL TEAM FOR WINNING NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of House Resolution 99, congratulating the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Women's Volleyball team on winning the 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship. December 16, 2006 marked the completion of a phenomenal year that resulted in a 33-1 record and the program's third national title, not to mention the largest audience ever for a woman's college volleyball game.

The hard work and determination of this team exudes the spirit of achievement that is reflected within the people of the great State of Nebraska. Junior Sarah Pavan has continued a Husker tradition of achievement in athletics and academics by being named the ESPN the Magazine Academic All-American of the Year. This honor brings the university's all-time total of Academic All-Americans to 234 and 29 for the program. These totals lead the nation in both categories.

Head coach John Cook, along with the entire coaching staff, should be commended for their training and dedication to a team that became only the third team in NCAA history to be ranked number one in the American Volleyball Coaches Association poll for an entire season. Also to the credit of Coach Cook, this is the second title that the team has earned under his direction.

Therefore, I ask my colleagues to consider the great honor that the University of Nebraska Volleyball team has brought to themselves, their families, their university, and the State of Nebraska and vote for House Resolution 99.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS FOR SECTION 511 REPEAL

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today, pleased to introduce a piece of legislation along with my co-sponsor and esteemed Ways and Means colleague, Congressman WALLY HERGER, that will repeal a law that unfairly burdens local governments with annual procurement spending over \$100 million, which includes Miami-Dade County.

The legislation would repeal Section 511 of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 which was slipped into the legislation without an up-or-down vote on the amendment.

Section 511 requires local governments that spend over \$100 million in procurements, primarily located in large urban centers, to deduct a 3 percent withholding tax from payments made to their vendors for federal income tax purposes. This legislation will become effective in 2011.

We have the opportunity with this legislation to help repeal Section 511 which unfairly burdens our cities and urban centers where many people living below the poverty line reside. If Section 511 is not repealed, the poor will be further squeezed as the cost of future increased procurement contracts will be passed on to the neediest people, while services and day-to-day operations may be jeopardized too.

According to Miami-Dade County officials, the withholding tax will raise the cost of purchases by 3 percent or more and Miami-Dade County would have to absorb an annual increase in the cost of goods and services in excess of \$57 million, given the annual value of contracts for goods and services awarded by Miami-Dade County will exceed \$1.9 billion.

Small businesses and companies pursuing government contracts, many of whom operate on tight margins or irregular cash flows, would also be adversely affected in this bid process, while large companies with established reserves could better absorb this withholding tax.

Devolution of taxation down from the federal government to state and local governments is a problem that we must fix. This is but one small, but very important step toward doing just that.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WITHHOLDING TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2007

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I have long championed tax relief for small businesses because I believe such firms are the life-blood of our economy. As a small businessman myself, I know how small business owners struggle to remain profitable in a highly competitive and extremely challenging environment. Yet they continue to be the drivers of much of our nation's economic and new job growth. It is for this reason that I have strongly supported increases to the current section 179 small business expensing limits, an end to the onerous death tax, and the reduced double taxation of capital gains and dividends. I am concerned, however, that a little known revenue raising provision, passed as part of the tax reconciliation bill last May, will hamper small business creative spirit by significantly and adversely changing the way governments pay for the goods they use and services they require.

Effective in 2011, section 511 of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 will require federal, state, and local governments to withhold 3 percent from payments for goods and services, excluding payments to non-profits and those made by governments with less than \$100 million in annual expenditures. This onerous provision will not take effect for just under four years. But I believe we have to begin addressing the impacts it will have on honest taxpaying businesses now, and actively seek alternatives to withholding.

Thousands of businesses and individuals across the country are reimbursed by governments for various reasons every day. In my Northern California congressional district, governments rely on local and regional businesses all the time to maintain public services—from the electrician who re-wires a city council chamber in Redding to the construction company that builds an interchange at a dangerous stretch of highway in Butte County. When the Feather River needs a new setback levee, or an existing levee in the network requires urgent repairs to protect the community, the Army Corps of Engineers employs local businesses for construction and materials. Similarly, when an escape route from a fire-prone community requires widening, the government turns to local sources to get the job done.

In 2011, however, firms providing these necessary goods and services to governments will see 3 percent of their payments withheld.

I am troubled that the withholding provision will effectively force firms to float a new interest-free loan to the federal Treasury if they do business with a local, state or federal government. In addition, unlike other income-based withholding, which is actually based on tax liability, the new government withholding provision is based on government payments with no relationship to a company's taxable income. This means that, while businesses will be deprived of much needed cash flows for day-to-day operations, the 3 percent provision could end up significantly over withholding for tax purposes. The Joint Committee on Taxation confirmed this in its description of the

provision, stating "sellers of goods and materials are more likely to have overwithholding and, thus, bear more of the burden of a flat rate because of the lower profit margin on such sales relative to sales of services."

The provision would also disproportionately harm small- and medium-sized businesses that operate on low margins, and contractors that frequently employ subcontractors. It is conceivable that, faced with 3 percent withholding on a revenue source, companies that do business with governments may inflate contract costs to compensate, shift costs to subcontractors, or simply hire fewer employees over the course of the year. Others may resort to increased debt financing to make up for reduced cash flows. In addition, governments at all levels have expressed concerns over the new administrative burdens that such withholding will require.

Among the reasons for inclusion of this provision was a desire to reduce America's tax gap, or the difference between the taxes we believe should be collected in a given year, and those that actually are. The Internal Revenue Service currently estimates the net tax gap to be in the area of \$290 billion. Whether due to taxpayer error or willful tax avoidance, the tax gap is a very real problem that can undermine taxpayer confidence in the voluntary nature of our tax system, and encourage continued non-compliance. According to the National Taxpayer Advocate, the "cost" of the tax gap could be equated to a \$2,000 annual "surtax" on each taxpayer to subsidize non-compliance. The result is that the tax gap ends up "harming compliant taxpayers because they pay their correct tax liability while others do not."

Like many, I believe that bridging the tax gap and encouraging tax compliance should remain a top priority of both Congress and the Administration. Where identification of specific non-compliant sectors of the economy has been difficult, the Administration should continue to investigate ways it can use its existing authority to improve the collection and utilization of nonwage taxpayer information for enforcement purposes. In addition, as better information on noncompliance is generated, Congress should actively consider whether additional legislation is needed to crack down on tax cheats.

Prior to implementing a new tax collection regime, such as the 3 percent withholding provision, we should investigate what other methods are at our disposal to deal with the outstanding problems of non-compliance. To this end, I believe that any solution that aims to reduce the tax gap should consider the impacts of new burdens on taxpayers.

For this reason, I am pleased to join my fellow Ways and Means Committee member, Representative KENDRICK MEEK of Florida, in introducing the "Withholding Tax Relief Act of 2007." This bill mirrors legislation I introduced toward the end of the 109th Congress along with Senator LARRY CRAIG of Idaho.

While I recognize the underlying problem of tax compliance must be addressed, I believe this problem—as it pertains to businesses and individuals that provide goods and services to governments—can be tackled in a less intrusive manner than withholding, and with positive results. As reported by the Joint Committee, the withholding provision is estimated to increase revenues coming into the Treasury by \$6.079 billion in its first year of implementa-

tion, and between \$215 million and \$235 million per year over the next 4 years. Further, the Joint Committee recognizes that the "significant revenue effect" in the year of implementation "is largely attributable to accelerating tax receipts," indicating that the additional compliance sought by this provision is really in the ballpark of \$235 million. Still, in order to recapture this amount of unpaid taxes, the withholding provision will affect over \$6 billion of government payments to honest businesses and individual taxpayers.

It is unrealistic to think that we could ever reduce non-compliance to zero, especially given the enormous complexity of our current tax code. But apart from fundamental tax reform and simplification, increased compliance should remain an objective. Congress and the Administration should continue to pursue increased compliance alternatives, including the use of the Federal Government's already broad authority to levy Federal payments, improving coordination and use of taxpayer information, requiring new information reporting, or increasing enforcement. Ultimately, though, any alternatives that focus on compliance should be balanced against the new burdens such compliance mechanisms would cause. We should avoid placing unnecessary burdens on all honest taxpayers in a particular sector of the economy to force the compliance of the few.

Although I recognize that repeal of the 3 percent withholding provision will leave the actual problem of non-compliance unanswered, I believe withholding is the wrong policy approach to this issue. Repeal, as proposed in the "Withholding Tax Relief Act of 2007," serves as a reminder of the importance of this issue, and the need to seriously address the impacts this policy will have on businesses in the congressional district I represent and elsewhere in the country. In addition, we must also begin discussion of alternatives to withholding. I intend to continue working with others in the 110th Congress on ways to reduce any eventual burdens this provision will cause, as well as alternatives to withholding that will reduce taxpayer non-compliance.

TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IRON COUNTY, MISSOURI

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. EMERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Iron County, MO. I congratulate Iron County and all of its residents as they celebrate this milestone.

On this occasion, I am reminded of Iron County's rich Civil War history and its economic and recreational contributions to our State and Nation. Iron County is the home of Fort Davidson State Historic Site, which commemorates the Civil War battle at Fort Davidson where an outmanned Union army delayed a Confederate invasion of nearby St. Louis. The delay allowed the Union to successfully defend St. Louis and ultimately achieve victory in the war.

Additionally, Iron County is well known for its natural beauty and abundance of re-

sources. Settled beautifully along the oldest mountain range on our continent, the Ozark Highland, Iron County has helped supply our Nation with lead and electricity for decades.

Iron County is the home of strong family values that form the foundation of our communities. I thank those whose daily works of neighborliness and good citizenship make Iron County a wonderful place in which to live and work. My thoughts and prayers will continue to be with the residents of Iron County whom I have come to know well and deeply respect. Again, congratulations to Iron County, MO, on 150 years of wonderful history.

COMMEMORATING THE NATIONAL PSORIASIS FOUNDATION'S FOURTH ANNUAL CAPITOL HILL DAY FEBRUARY 2007

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the National Psoriasis Foundation and its fourth annual Capitol Hill Day, to be held February 26, through which the Foundation and nearly 100 advocates from across the country will seek to bring much-needed attention to an often overlooked and serious disease that affects constituents in each of our districts. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as many as 7.5 million Americans are affected by psoriasis—a chronic, inflammatory, painful, disfiguring and disabling disease for which there are limited treatments and no cure. Ten to 30 percent of people with psoriasis also develop psoriatic arthritis, which causes pain, stiffness and swelling in and around the joints. There are an average of 17,000 people living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis in every congressional district. (Estimate based on 2000 Census Data/Census apportionment population with the average size of a congressional district of 646,952 and prevalence rate of 2.6 percent.) In my district, there are nearly 20,000 constituents and 320,000 Pennsylvanians state-wide affected by psoriasis.

Psoriasis is widely misunderstood, minimized and under-treated. In addition to the pain, itching and bleeding caused by psoriasis, many affected individuals also experience social discrimination and stigma. Many people also mistakenly believe psoriasis to be contagious. Psoriasis typically first strikes between the ages of 15 and 25 and lasts a lifetime. As such, psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis impose significant burden on individuals and society; together they cost the Nation 56 million hours of lost work and between \$2 billion and \$3 billion in treatments each year.

Despite the serious adverse effects that psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis have on individuals, families and society, psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are under-recognized and under-funded by our Nation's research institutions. The NIH has spent less than one dollar per person with psoriasis on average each of the last 10 years. At the historical and current rate of psoriasis funding, NIH funding is not keeping pace with research needs. I urge my colleagues to take action this year to boost funding for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, support efforts to improve and expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis data collection,

study and improve access to care and treatment for these diseases, and help debunk the myths associated with psoriasis.

I thank the National Psoriasis Foundation for all of its efforts and leadership over the last four decades and am grateful to the Foundation and its members for their ongoing commitment to improving quality of life for people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding advocacy and leadership of my constituent, Lara Wine Lee, who has psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and who has helped to educate me and my staff about the challenges for people living with these terrible conditions. Again, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting our tens of thousands of constituents with psoriasis and the National Psoriasis Foundation. I call upon this Congress to take action to expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis research and ensure access to care and treatment for this disease and stand ready to lead this important effort.

A TRIBUTE TO VIOLETTA KOVÁCS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to a wonderful Hungarian author, Violetta Kovács. Ms. Kovács devotion to man's best friend is

dutifully communicated in her eloquent prose and knowledge of dogs.

As the President of the Hungarian Journalist Association's Animal Welfare Division for the last 10 years, she has played an integral role in the introduction and enactment of the Hungarian Animal Welfare Act. This important piece of legislation finally criminalized acts that, until then were merely moral transgressions, the torture of animals in Hungary.

Madam Speaker, her passion for animals can be seen in her legislation and also her superbly written and popular books, like: *From Guide Dogs to Dog Stars*, *Sounds of a Dog's Heart* and *Dog Commando*. In these books she calls attention to the loyalty, bravery and sacrifice inherent in the character of dogs. Dogs are always on man's side helping to prevent crimes, capturing criminals, collecting evidence and rescuing those lost or stranded in the wilderness. They were at the side of firemen and other search and rescue teams that worked so valiantly during those dark days after September 11th, searching relentlessly for survivors.

Madam Speaker, in *Dog Commando*, Violetta paid tribute to the K9 teams and rescue dogs she witnessed combing the ruins of the horrible terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Those powerful moments made her realize what we really owe our best friends and this cannot be forgotten, even in our most tragic hours. Reading her book we witness the true stories of Officer Frank McDermott and Mark Day with their beloved four-legged partners and their col-

leagues from all over the world. These fine people talk about their dogs with deep emotions, sometimes with tears, each and every one indicating an invisible, unique and everlasting bond between man and animal.

Madam Speaker, as the co-chair of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Violetta Kovács for her endless efforts in animal protection, and to the K9 and rescue dogs of the world for their service to the mankind.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, February 13th, I was unavoidably delayed and was unable to cast a vote on H. Res. 157 Providing for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

I would like the RECORD to reflect that if I had not been delayed, I would have voted "no" on H. Res. 157.